

Washington, DC - Addressing the priorities of suburban families and communities, 50 members of the Suburban Caucus met today to introduce the Suburban Agenda, a set of legislative initiatives developed in response to concerns voiced by suburban families from across the United States.

With over half of Americans living in suburban communities today, members of the Suburban Caucus worked for six months to design an agenda for Congress to meet their key priorities in education, health care, economic growth and conservation.

"Suburban families face a number of critical problems," said Rep. Mark Kirk, Chairman of the Suburban Caucus. "Drug gangs are moving to our suburban communities, thousands of online predators are trying to contact our kids, green and open space is rapidly disappearing from our neighborhoods, and millions of Americans worry that it may be more difficult for their children to enter the middle class than it was for us. Suburban families feel they are under attack and they deserve a voice in the Congress."

The Suburban Caucus introduced seven bills, the first in a series of legislative initiatives the Congress will work to enact in the coming months. The new legislation includes the:

§ **School Safety Acquiring Faculty Excellence Act** (Jon Porter (NV), H.R. 4894) linking state and national criminal databases to make sure interstate pedophiles are not hired as teachers or coaches.

§ **401 Kids Family Savings Accounts** (Clay Shaw (FL), H.R. 5314) establishing savings for kids from birth to pay for education or to purchase first home.

§ **Health Information Technology Promotion Act** (Nancy Johnson (CT), H. R. 4157) setting guidelines to establish electronic medical records

§ **Deleting Online Predators Act** (Mike Fitzpatrick (PA), H.R. 5319) protecting children from online predators especially on social networking sites such as MySpace.com.

§ **Open Space and Farmland Preservation Act** (Jim Gerlach (PA), H.R. 5313) establishing local grant programs to protect suburban open space.

§ **Gang Elimination Act of 2006** (Dave Reichert (WA), H.R. 5291) fighting new suburban drug gangs.

§ **Charitable Donations for Open Space Act** (Mike Fitzpatrick (PA), H.R. 5056) creating tax easements for charitable donations for open space.

"American families are focused on keeping their kids safe, securing a strong financial future, preserving the natural beauty of their community, and ensuring healthcare coverage. Our Suburban Agenda addresses these critical issues in places like Libertyville, Illinois," said Kirk.

"It represents a grassroots, common-sense set of solutions for families in suburban communities.

The Caucus will work to move these bills through the House and will welcome Democratic support."

The Suburban Caucus outlined several other legislative initiatives coming this fall including an extension of COBRA family insurance coverage, Superfund program reforms to speed up the clean up of toxic waste sites, and measures to help protect classrooms and students from drugs and weapons.